

/334 cont./

241

Before taking possession of a new plot of land the

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[685]

Chiriguano is always careful to make sure that there is no trace of previous cultivation. Otherwise the former owner or his descendants would have the right to lodge a complaint against him to the chief of the village.

[824]

The Chiriguano makes known his new property right by planting any edible plant before the rainy season, for example, the large squash (gindako-wasu) which spreads everywhere and is not smothered by the underbrush. He can equally well insure possession of the chosen terrain by knocking down the underbrush all around and making big gashes in the trees (1).

[191]

1. Compare this manner of insuring property rights with the method observed by the Caxinawa /Cashinawa/ in the same circumstances: "I saw (an Indian is speaking) rising ground which is suitable for a planting. I am going to make a planting for this summer. I broke many branches on this hill to mark this excellent place. No one can make his clearing on this hill. This hill is excellent; do not go there to make your planting." (Abreu, p. 69.)

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In the middle of the dry season, say, in August, the Indian, with a long stick sharp on both sides, fells the underbrush which encumbers his future field and sets fire to it. This operation has the further advantage of fertilizing the soil, thanks to the bed of ashes, which is a rather good fertilizer.

The cultivated fields are usually cleaned up after the harvest.

[231]

The domestic animals, who feed there with little expense, are first let out there, and then the fields are set afire.

[221]

Sowing takes place in the month of November when the first rainstorms have softened the soil. This time is announced by

[821]

the appearance of the Pleiades (itsu) above the horizon early in the morning.

Chieftainship was inherited in the male line, but the title was bestowed only on a chief's son only if he were worthy of it. There are only a very few cases of women ruling a Chiriguano group, but the Chauc remembered the names of several women leaders. According to a genealogy of a Chauc chiefly family recorded by Nordenskiöld (1912, p. 229), power was inherited successively by the brothers and sisters of a deceased chief before it passed to his son. In the village visited by Nordenskiöld, the brother's son of the chieftainess was the actual ruler, but her son by a commoner was the heir apparent. This system of succession is probably the same as the one prevailing among the eastern Chauc (Guano).

Chiriguano chiefs of the past wore conspicuous ornaments and were entitled to carry the yandura, a pole with a bunch of feathers tied at the end, and a carved stick.

Property.—A plot that had once been cultivated by a man belonged to him and to his descendants, but could not be alienated by him. In order to insure new ownership rights, a Chiriguano would plant a few pumpkins on the land which he intended to clear.

Justice.—Thieves were expelled from the community or sometimes were flogged. A man convicted of adultery could lose his property. Murderers were sent into exile, unless the victim's family had time to kill him first. Wronged individuals often took justice into their own hands and challenged the offender to a duel. The settlement of old accounts occurred generally during drinking bouts.

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—Soon after childbirth, the mother went to the river to wash and smear herself with urucú. Both parents observed various food taboos. The father rested for a few days on his bed and refrained from any work, lest he harm the baby. One twin, as well as any malformed infant, was killed (Campana, 1902, p. 72).

Puberty.—Menstrual flow was attributed to the bite of a mysterious serpent. At her first menses a girl was hoisted in her hammock to the roof of the hut, where she was compelled to stay for 5 days without uttering a word. Then she remained for a month or more enclosed in a corner of the hut. Her hair was clipped short, and she was put on a diet of boiled maize. During her seclusion, she spun and wove wool and cotton so that she would be diligent for the rest of her life. Meanwhile, she became pallid, which was greatly admired when she returned to normal life. Henceforth, she used the affirmative "é, é" instead of the childish "ú, ú."

In ancient times, the confinement of a pubescent girl lasted for several months or even for a year¹ (Campana, 1902, p. 86).

¹ According to Father Chauc (1819 b, p. 203), the pubescent girl was hoisted in her hammock near the roof. During the second month, the hammock was lowered, but the confinement ended only in the third month, when a group of old women entered the hut with sticks to start a symbolic hunt for the serpent that had bitten the girl.

/172 cont./

342
124

The hardest part is finished with the previous operation: a short rest is taken, and then the owner of the new building must obtain enough hollow cane, engaging for this purpose Indians who have horses. But if the cane is very far away and has owners to boot, he gathers long sticks of astringent acacia or sebil and puts them horizontally every 15 centimeters on top of the rafters with the same above-mentioned lianas. Some people, to tie the cane or sticks, use thin cords made from cowhide, but this, in addition to being more expensive, is less durable than bejuco (1).

[283]

1. Before the whites settled in Chiriguano country, hollow cane was abundant and had no owners: at the present time it cannot be found, and, if there is any, it is in private hands and must be bought.

[30]
[178]
[423]

Generally, before the walls are begun the house is covered with capil, red straw, or, should this not be available, with capiancua, straw for harnesses of beasts of burden, which is of inferior quality and very soon frays to pieces with the rain, sun, and strong winds, while the capil may last for more than ten years.

[476]

If it can be obtained by staying for a few days in a place where it is plentiful, he pulls it up there and reduces it to rather large handfuls: the gathering is done in several days, engaging Indians who own horses. When the material is in the town, he rests for a few days or weeks; he informs or invites those who wish to take part, in particular those who are closest to him by kinship or friendship. These then go about tying the capil between two horizontal canes toward the side of the roof, forming long, narrow lines, and when they are so placed, they attach them horizontally, beginning at the bottom and working /173/ upward or toward the ridgepole, where they leave a large vent to let out the eternal smoke of their inextinguishable fires (1).

[354]

1. Now the red straw is disappearing almost completely: the destruction of this necessary

/236 cont./

197
648

for himself, for his children, and for his wife (1).

1. Perhaps without intending to do so, the whites have done and are doing a work of charity for the Indian, that of moralizing him somewhat through work, during which he neither gets drunk nor thinks of trifles, etc. Only in some places a little moderation is needed in order not to discourage him.

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973
996

It was also the Aguara-Tumpa who taught the Chiriguano the cultivation of land, since, seeing that he had not been able to remedy his misery and needs by handing over the bows and arrows, he once again visited his poor hut, and seeing him thin and emaciated, he gave him all kinds of seed so that he might make them bear fruit, teaching him the method of burying them and advising him also of the way and the time for pulling out the weeds with a weeder, because he would have seemed bad before his enemy and before the Indian himself if he had not completed his philanthropical work, after criticizing so much the true friend of Chiriguano humanity (2).

2. The Aguara-Tumpa, For God, did not tell him that the seeds could be eaten right away, because in that way they would have been lost immediately. After they had germinated, he advised that when they were ripe, he could have food for himself and for his family.

• 423

Every Chiriguano has a small plot of cultivated land, sufficient for himself and for his family. Nobody had previously entered the area in which the Indians live, so that nobody disputed their property rights, as they should not be disputed today, because they are the owners ab immemoriali, and no individual could have sold what belonged to the community.

/238 cont./

423
311 To acquire possession of a small plot of land, the Chiriguano selects beforehand the part that he likes best in the region, which he judges to be wet enough because it is on the slopes of ridges or hills or because water collects there in the rainy season. Naturally, the site which he intends to cultivate must have no signs of previous cultivation, because if there were any the owner or his descendants, even though at some distance, would immediately place a claim before the competent authority, the cacique.

423
[241] If the plot has not been tilled, he can be sure of not being disturbed, and before the rainy season ends he plants on it anything /239/ which will be visible, such as the Güindacaguan, a large gourd which spreads a great deal, invades everything, and is not easily strangled by weeds. Another way to acquire property is to break all the bushes around the site, or, finally, to make cuts with his ax on the largest trees.

241 No one can lay claim to a place that belongs to the community of the Indians, where anyone has worked, and the one who made the prior signs is regarded as the owner. The rainy season passes, the cold comes and dries up the grass and the leaves of the trees; before August ends, the Indian sets fire to the whole new plot, which consumes the grass and the brambles and makes useless the larger trees. All the ashes [461] that are left are fertilizer for the land, and the fire has destroyed all the seeds of the weeds and brush, so that the first planting which is done on the new plot is almost free of weeds, which saves labor for the lazy Chiriguano (1).

1. The old Indians still do some work in order not to have many weeds in their fields, but the modern ones are little concerned about it now in many areas. Moreover, the cattle do not leave any time, invading everything and eating up the pasturage in a short time. It is very sensible to prohibit the burning of the fields after the harvest.

150

XXIV

Trophies.

C
Ce
727
[527] We know from several writers¹⁾ that the Chiriguano used to keep the heads of their beaten enemies as trophies. According to what a Chané Indian named Batirayu told me, the Chané used to bring home the heads of slain enemies. At festivals these were put up on the square in the villages. Thanks to FRIEDERICI we have a fine work on scalping in America to which I beg to refer. It is, at present, impossible to say whence the Chiriguano and Chané obtained this custom.

¹⁾ See BUSTILLA P. and CARRASO P. *op.*

XXV.

Property Marks.

C
Ce
● 423
177 In part I (Map 34) I have already written about the geographic distribution of such marks. They belong to the cultural elements that these Indians probably got from the culture zone in the west.

Ee
622
643
554
/230 cont./

The chiefs' families form a sort of aristocracy among the Chiriguano and Chané. Several times I heard Indians boast about their good family connections. A Chiriguano who accompanied me for some time as an interpreter was eager to impress upon me that he was related to the most famous high chiefs.

Just as the author of this book is customarily introduced as the son of Adolf Nordenskiöld, so the Indians were wont to introduce in similar fashion the sons of their "great men."

I even discovered a bit of deception in connection with the family tree. A Chané claimed direct descent from the great Hinu Parava, which, however, is said to be untrue.

If one wishes to find beautiful things from olden times among these Indians, one must first look for them in the chiefs' families. They keep the old treasures.

Ee
[177]
Ee
622
423
122
643
More and more the white authorities are beginning to appoint the chiefs. Thus, in one region one can find a chief supported by the whites and a legitimate one.

The chiefs have great power, and, as far as I could see, they are always obeyed, in contrast to conditions among the Choroti and Ashluslay. They own the land (at least in certain regions), not for themselves, but for the tribe. If one needs porters in a Chané or Chiriguano village, one gets them from the chief, and no Indian will refuse to carry out the orders of the chief.

Ee
622
643
Ee
[357]
[177]
Ee
177
464
Although the chief has such great influence, /231/ he nevertheless works in the same way as the other Indians. Vocaboy himself, for example, carried home the heavy wood for cooking the maize beer, and his wife had to cook and sweep, like the other women. Following the example of the whites, however, a few of the most civilized and wealthy Indians, such as Taco, now have servants from their own tribe, but this was not done originally. On the other hand, as I have mentioned elsewhere, it is not unusual for the Mataco-Vejos and the Tapiete to work for the Chiriguano and Chané.

Ee
622
643
431
123
When we came home to Vocaboy's village from hunting and shared our booty with the chief /Fig. 115 appears here/, his wife accepted everything, but then went around to the houses and gave her neighbors everything that she had received.

Ce
692
643
628
/89 cont./
of the deceased (359).

359. Nord. 1. p. 331.

C
421
C
423
Private property is highly respected among the Chiriguano. According to Métraux, even the closest relatives cannot make use of the property of one of them without his consent. The possession of a piece of land is guaranteed to a Chiriguano by planting any plant on it or by clearing the circumference of the land required and making large slashes in the trees. When he selects a plot for his planting, the Chiriguano examines it carefully to determine that there are no traces of a previous planting (360).

C
241
476
(622)
360. Métraux I. pp. 334 and 340.

After the land selected for the planting has been cleared, relatives and friends are called together to help with the work. Formerly, the cacique of the town also took part by keeping watch for the workers (361).

361. Métraux I. p. 337.

Religion

Religion

Ce
747
771
178
538
In their many years of activity the missions have naturally influenced notably the religious notions of the Chiriguano and Chané. Most of them today are Christians. Some still retain part of their primordial ideas, expressed in their legends. I shall limit myself here to referring the reader again to the Chané legends taken down by Nordenskiöld (362) and mentioned several times in the preceding.

362. Nord. 1. pp. 251-296.